252 wild in various parts of the area. The oil rendered from [222] these kernels is probably used only for lighting, because [373] it is poisonous. Due to their heavy content of prussic acid, a handful of them is considered deadly. In Ni- [762] agara, if somebody wants to commit suicide, he jumps over Niagara Falls; in Hunza, they eat a batch of wild apricot kernels.

The kneading process is continued and the vessel is kept tilted so the oil runs down and forms a small pool. As the oil begins to form, the kneading becomes even more vigorous until every drop of oil possible is extracted. While the rendering of the oil may be hard on the knuckles, nothing could be simpler and the resulting product is probably the most healthful and finest fat product that human hands can produce.

[231] The pulp that remains after the oil[1] is extracted is [302] fed to milk-giving goats, sheep or cows, and is often used as a concoction or shampoo in which the Hunzans wash their heads. The oil of course is used in cooking, baking, frying, for lighting—and even for the hair.

[461] The good woman who performed the oil extracting task for me did not seem to be the least bit overburdened or taxed from this sort of arduous work. It probably would have been a hard day's work for a Western woman.

I would like to stress at this point that the heating process was not a cooking process in any sense of the word. Just a slight warming was all that was needed.

251 The apricot oil is never rendered and stored in casks 252 or otherwise, like many other people do with their oils. They may make sufficient to last them a few days but not more. This is poured into an earthen vessel or a bottle, if available. When a further supply is required, the pits are cracked and they go through the entire process as outlined.

1 [i.e - oil from apricot seeds - ANALYST]

584 Marriages are not arranged against
586 the will of either party, and although
divorce is legally very easy for men
593 or women, it is not common. Women
are neither abused nor overworked,
and the mother is the respected chief
of the house, as the father is of the
[581] farm. Marriage does not encompass
[562] companionship as we know it: men
spend their spare time in the company
of other men, and women visit exclu-
562 sively with other women. They hold
535 their dances on separate threshing
floors a half-mile or so apart, on the
same night, and woe betide the eager
teen-age boy who dresses in his sister's
clothes and sneaks into a girls' dance.

262 At the time of the Tumushuling,
[296] and only then, Hunza families
231 butcher a sheep or two; cold weather
[251] preserves the meat for the few days
before it is all eaten—and it is virtually
all eaten. Even the long bones are
cracked to extract the last marrow.
After this taste of meat, the winter of
the dietary year sets in. Gradually the
supply of carrots and potatoes fails,
then the wheat, the barley, the dried
[146] apricots, and the tea. By springtime
the poorer folk may eat only once in
two days. No one starves to death, but
no one has enough to stop hunger.

146 The regular Hunza diet has no fats,
no animal proteins, no vitamin A, no
vitamin D, a deficiency of vitamin B,
and a serious deficiency of calcium.
Apricots contain some sugar and vita-
min C, but the poorer families are un-
245 able to raise large crops. (The size
556 of apricot orchards determines a
man's wealth and status.) Hunzas use
372 every bit of the apricot, as they do of
824 the sheep. They cut the pits from the
fruits, crack them, and remove the al-
[412] mond-like nuts. The women hand-
grind these with stone mortars, then
squeeze the meal between a hand-stone
[354] and a flat rock to express the oil. Apri-
cot oil is fuel for the saucer-shaped
lamps that illuminate their homes, as
lamps of this type have done since the
824 Bronze Age. The oil is very bitter, na-
278 turally enough, because of its high
content of prussic acid, fifty drops of
which are said to be lethal in about
[273] four hours. Men add a few drops, as
[262] bitters, to their wine, and occasion-
ally a despondent woman takes a dose
in order to commit suicide.

164 Mild cases of rickets and scurvy
146 are rampant every spring—not enough
to kill, just enough to loosen teeth,
cause aching knees, and deform ribs

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It is also a matter of accepted tradition in Gilgit, Gor, Hunza, and Nager, that suttee was formerly practised. The dead man, with his finest clothes and his weapons girded on him was placed on the pyre, and as the fire burnt up, the woman, arrayed in her jewellery and her richest clothes, leaped into the flames.

The burning of the dead ceased to be practised more than sixty years ago. One or two old men have told me that they could remember hearing it mentioned, as a not uncommon occurrence, in their youth, but none could recollect having witnessed any actual instance. So lately as in 1877, a very old man in Darel scandalised his neighbours by calling his sons to him on his death b[illegible], and after having his arms and valuables brought to him, d[illegible]ng to be burnt with them when dead. His wish, howev[illegible], was not carried out. He and a man of Gor, who died twenty years ago, are known to have always refused to be circumcised, or to call themselves Mahommedans. They were probably the very last Hindoos in Dangaristan. Suttee was abolished earlier, and has certainly not been practised in Dangaristan for the last hundred years.

D 771 171

It is to be remarked that none of these customs, which savour so strongly of modern Hindooism, are to be found, either as now existing or as resting on former tradition, in any of the valleys to which the Shin rule did not extend; nor is the term Dangarik applied in any cases except those mentioned. The difference between some types of Hindooism and Buddhism is not necessarily very great, but the existence of customs among them, not shared by their neighbours, the establishment of a caste system, the use of the title of Ra for their rulers, and the common suffix of *Sing* to their own names, with the frequent use of Sanscrit terms, show that considerable differences exist between the Shins and their neighbours of the Swat, Punjkorah, and Chitral Valleys, with whose language their own has so much in common.

D 778 782

In spite of the more severe type of Mahommedanism which prevails, and which gathers strength year by year, idolatrous customs still survive. In every village in which Shins are in the majority, there is a large stone, which is still more or less the object of reverence. Each village has its own name for this stone, but an oath taken or an engagement made over it, is often held more binding than where the Koran is used. In several villages goats are still annually